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SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT: "Intelligence - to the
Level of Modern Demands", by Major-General
Ya. Malakhov

Intelligence - to the Level of Modern Demands

by

Major-General Ya. Malakhov

Lieutenant-General M. Kochetkov's article, "The Elimination of the Lag in Operational and Tactical Intelligence"¹ touches on a series of problems, the practical solution of which has important significance in raising intelligence to the level of modern demands.

While we entirely share the author's opinions on the basic tenets of the article, we should like to state some views on this problem.

Recently, both in the pages of the military press and at the critiques of command-staff exercises and troop exercises, there has been repeated talk about raising the role of intelligence, about its exceptional significance for the achievement of success in combat and in operations, and about the lagging of intelligence means (sredstvo razvedki) behind the means of destruction. Unfortunately, however, in practice, nothing is being done to bring the potentialities of intelligence into accordance with the demands which present themselves and with the tasks which confront it.

In our opinion, this results from the fact that there is no single intelligence organ (razvedyvatelnyy organ) in the Soviet army to direct operational and tactical intelligence in the military forces.

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1. Special Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought", Second Issue, 1960.

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In actual fact, the Chief Intelligence Directorate (Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravleniye - GRU) of the General Staff has no such organ, and its guidance is limited to agent and radiotechnical intelligence in border districts and in groups of forces.

The intelligence department of the Main Staff (Glavnyy Shtab) of the Ground Troops does not direct operational intelligence in the districts on a daily basis, but at operational-strategic command-staff exercises and maneuvers the reconnaissance detachment (razvedyvatelnyy otryad - RO) of the Main Staff of the Ground Troops prepares the appropriate materials for critiques and draws conclusions on its state.

This all results in the fact that the supervision of the training of personnel and of the activity of operational and tactical intelligence are carried out at the center by several chiefs, and are in essence uncoordinated by anyone. Thus, for instance, the chiefs of intelligence of border districts receive directives from several chiefs of directorates and departments of the Chief Intelligence Directorate, from the chief of intelligence of the Main Staff of the Ground Troops, from the Chief Directorate of Combat Training and sometimes also from the headquarters of troops of the Antiaircraft Defense (Protivo-Vozdushnaya Oborona - PVO) of the Country. Each is interested, not in the state of intelligence in the district as a whole, but only in individual questions which concern their department (vedomstvo). This seems to be the only way in which one can explain a situation in which the problematical questions of intelligence are not resolved. Moreover, we still have no manual of military intelligence, or technical means for reconnaissance against nuclear/missile weapons, or appropriate means of communication, while the methods of intelligence employed by the troops are extremely primitive and do not ensure the solution of this complicated problem.

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The absence of a single organ for the supervision of operational and tactical intelligence in districts results in the fact that the resolution of even simple problems takes years. For example, combat reconnaissance patrol vehicles (boyevo-razvedochnaya dozornaya mashina - BRDM) began to reach the troops in 1958, but the problem of installing a machine gun and optical observation instruments in them has not been decided to this day.

It is known that no new technical means of intelligence will give good results if there are not well-trained personnel to use them.

The Commander-in-Chief of Ground Troops, Marshal of the Soviet Union V. I. Chuykov, at the critique of the command-staff exercise "DON", explained: "Equipment in itself, no matter how perfect, will not ensure the radical improvement of the state of intelligence. Commanders and staffs at all levels must learn the correct way of organizing intelligence practically and of directing it continuously".

Meanwhile, intelligence officers, who would know intelligence equipment well and who would know how to organize and carry out intelligence in modern operations, are not being trained properly in the military-educational institutions.

The higher intelligence courses for intelligence officers, the intelligence faculty of the Academy i/n M.V. Frunze, the intelligence sections of the Academy of Armored Troops and of the Air Forces Academy, as well as the Military Institute of Foreign Languages, have been disbanded. It seems that in the existing higher military-educational institutions very little attention is devoted to the training of officers in the intelligence field. There are, therefore, frequent cases of officers who return to the troops after graduating at these institutions without even elementary knowledge, not to mention ability, in the organization of intelligence.

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All of this has resulted in the fact that only a limited number of intelligence officers with specialized academy education remains with the troops. The situation with regard to intelligence officer personnel can be illustrated by the example of the Belorussian Military District. Of all the intelligence officers in the district, starting with the intelligence chief of a unit and higher, only 20 percent have graduated from higher educational institutions. At the same time, in the last three years only one officer has come from an Academy for intelligence duty with the troops of the district. All of this makes it necessary to select for engagement in intelligence duties officers who have neither theoretical training nor practical ability in this work, which in turn affects the quality of the intelligence training of the troops and the combat training of intelligence subunits.

In our view, there is an urgent need for the serious reorganization of the training and advanced training of the intelligence officers of all types of armed forces and of all arms of troops.

In the training of intelligence officers, in our opinion, attention should be given, first of all, to the study of the technical means of intelligence and to their potentialities, to modes and methods of organizing and executing reconnaissance against nuclear/missile weapons, and to knowledge of the organization, armament, tactics, and operational art of the probable enemy. Taking into account the fact that there are almost no well-trained interpreters with the troops, and that the military-educational institutions are not training officers who know foreign languages, it is advisable that the training of officers who are proficient in foreign languages should be organized.

We share completely the opinion of the author of the article on the revival of intelligence in the arms of troops, but the solution of this problem in the sequence of the headquarters of a front-army-division must lie not through the channel of chiefs

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of intelligence of the appropriate commanders of arms of troops, but in the inclusion of such specialists in the intelligence sections, departments, and directorates of the combined-arms headquarters. We consider this method more expedient, firstly, because in the conditions of modern combat time (not in hours but in seconds and minutes) acquires primary significance, and this demands the shortening to the minimum of the channels (instantiya) along which tasks for, and information from, intelligence organs pass; secondly, because, in order to evaluate the situation properly, all information must flow to a single organ, which would collate, accumulate, and analyze it and draw the appropriate conclusions and thirdly, because, as Marshal of the Soviet Union V.I. Chuykov pointed out at the critique of the exercise "DON", "Only the combined-arms headquarters can plan intelligence activity purposefully and can utilize, for its execution, the various forces and means, taking into account their capabilities and the conditions of the situation".

It is most necessary to review and to strengthen technical equipment as a means of obtaining intelligence data, as well as the organs concerned with their processing. Let us take, for example, radiotechnical intelligence units (OSNAZ). These are of low mobility because of the bulk of the intelligence equipment which they carry and, perhaps, are simply not suitable for operations under field conditions.

As is known, the commanding officers of motorized-rifle and tank divisions, and the commanders of combined-arms and tank armies, have received and have at their disposal long-range missile means of destruction, but so far they possess absolutely no forces or means capable of carrying out intelligence to the possible depth of fire-destruction of targets.

We consider that each commanding officer (commander) must have at his disposal the forces and means necessary to assure continuous and vigorous conduct of intelligence, at least to the depth of the range of fire of the means available in the composition of a given unit, large unit, or formation.

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